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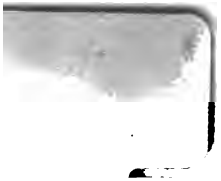

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FLOWERS.

FLOWERS

PLUCKED BY A

TRAVELLER ON THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

BY

CHARLES T. CONGDON.

A thing of beauty is a joy forever;
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.

John Keats' Endymion.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY GEORGE W. LIGHT.

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TO

MY COLLEGE FRIENDS

THESE TRIFLES

ARE

DEDICATED.

" Could we contract the choice of nature's plenty
Into one form, and that form to contain
All delicates, which the wanton sense
Would relish, or desire to invent; to please it,
The present were unworthy, for to purchase
The sacred league of friendship."

NOTICE.

THESE poems I have arranged in this volume in the order in which I wrote them. They have been some pleasure to me, and I would fain hope that others may find some pleasure in them, also. I expect and desire not fame; yet it is pleasant to me to know, that those who know me best and whom I love best, have expressed a desire to have them collected. To such I present the volume. I will not plead my youth in extenuation of its faults; because I think that some of the best and most beautiful thoughts of the mind, abide in the younger heart; and if the sentiments of a production be truthful, I envy not the mind of the man who can find fault with words and quarrel with tropes and metaphors. Be it "good, bad or indifferent," I cast this, but a crumb at best, upon the waters. The

bantling has been dutiful to its father, but the father has made it a foundling, trusting it to the mercies of a work-house world. Still I trust it will find a home as good as the one it has left; a home in good and quiet hearts; hearts which respect even an impotent striving after the truth.

New Bedford, Jan. 10, 1840.

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Go! little brain-begot!
  Companion of lone hours!
Go, tell the world, how a journeyer
  On life's way, has been plucking flowers!
And though the flowers were humble,
  That the poet plucked here and there,
Yet say that still he watched them
  With a father's care.
Say, how, when life grew darksome,
  They were gentle stars to him,
And shone to light him on his way,
  With a steady light though dim.
Oh! let no rude hand tear them!
  Good critic! hast thou no flowers,
Which have been to thee like children,
  With low prattle for lone hours?
If thou hast, thou know'st how gladly
  Come these little fairies up;

Thou know'st how gently they steal away
  Bitterness from wo's cup;
And give thee to drink of the crystal stream,
  Where sunlight has ever shone,
Over which no rainy cloudlet
  By misfortune has been blown.
Then spare these little blossoms,
  That for my delight have grown!
Respect a brother's hopings,
  And may God smile on thy own.

FLOWERS.

TO A LOST FRIEND.

But a few days have gone,
Since last I gazed upon the manly brow,
As pure as in its pallid beauty now
It sleepeth—noble one!

The hue, that now doth lie
Upon its dimmed brightness, was not there;
On it Life's seal had set its signet fair,
And hope was in thine eye.

So yet had memory limned thee;
And when a voice in faltering accents said,
That thou, the bright, the beautiful, wert dead,
'T was a dream's mystery.

For I had seen the flower
Droop when the shades of night around it fell;
And the babe die, ere hurrying time could tell
Its first short hour.

I had seen many left
Among the quicksands of life's treacherous stream,
And many a spirit mourn a broken dream—
But none of hope bereft.

Flowers, to which noon gave birth,
The being breathing but to flee away,
Hopes dimly shining in the future's ray,
All—all were of the earth.

But thou wert more—far more!
For to thy noble spirit had been given,
The choicest blessings that approving Heaven
On it could pour.

Mild, calm, divinely bright,
Thy spirit shed its influence on all
Who knew thee; as when starbeams fall
With pale and chastened light.

The light around thee shed,
Of highest heaven an earnest and a token,
But for our blinded spirits might have spoken,
And marked thee for the dead.

And I my voice would raise
Amidst a parent's and a sister's wail,
And give a simple verse to tell thy tale—
A leaflet to thy praise.

ON READING BRYANT'S THANATOPSIS.

Oh! when thy hand is heavy on me, Death!
And I with farewell glance shall feebly gaze
Upon life's past and yet untrodden ways,
Would that 'neath heaven might flee my breath,
While played around my brow the western gale,
And wood bird sang its spirit-soothing song,
With their glad music swept the brooks along,
And the bright song lit up thy shadowy vale,
As the child pineth for its place of birth,
While memory's lingering spirits round it wait,
Although its hearth be cold and desolate,
Lest so I still cling to the beautiful earth,
Oh! then may fall this strain from one I love,
And its last accents chime with those I hear above.

SPRING.

The voice of spring! the voice of spring
  Again comes on the gale;
Again its winds their life-breath pour
  On russet hill and vale.

The whispers through the brown old trees,
  And o'er the meadows pass,
While swells the bud, and springs the flower,
  And nods the freshening grass.

The snow, the relic of the storms,
  That in the hollows lay,
Melts, like a dream, before the glance
  Of Spring's returning ray.

And in its place, and by the walls,
  And in the black roots set,
Is looking out her earliest flower,
  The purple violet.

And all the earth is joying in
  Its broad and sunny beam;
More pleasant comes the herd's faint low,
  More lightly brawls the stream;

And as its ripples glide away,
  And greener valleys lave,
More swiftly glance the sunbeams on
  Its hurrying mimic wave.

The wood has waked; and thro' its aisles
  Are ringing, sweet and clear,
The birds' first notes, to welcome back
  The childhood of the year.

And the brown boughs, that yesterday
  Tossed 'neath the winter sky,
With that glad song are mingling
  Their low note cheerfully.

O Spring! we bless thee; for thy breath
  Stirs up each sluggish sense;
The heart grows warm, the pulses leap
  'Neath thy blest influence.

Each spot thy footsteps haunt below,
  Thy glorious skies above,
And e'en thy slightest tones but breathe
  The effluence of love.

THE BIRTH OF A NATION.

"Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?—*Isaiah* xlix. 24.

On the first of August, 1834, Slavery was abolished in the British West Indies, by act of Parliament. In Antigua, "the Wesleyans kept 'watch-night' in all their chapels on the evening of the 31st of July. One of the Wesleyan Missionaries gave us an account of the watch meeting in the chapel at St. Johns. The spacious house was filled with candidates for liberty. All was animation and eagerness. A mighty chorus of voices swelled the song of expectation and joy. In such exercises the evening was spent, until the hour of twelve approached. The missionary then proposed that when the clock on the cathedral should begin to strike, the whole congregation should fall on their knees and receive the boon of freedom in silence. Accordingly, as the loud bell tolled its first note, the immense assembly fell prostrate on their knees. All was silence, save the quivering half-stifled breath of the struggling spirit. The slow notes of the clock fell upon the multitude; peal on peal rolled over the prostrate throng in tones of angels' voices, thrilling among the desolate chords and weary hearts' strings."—*Thome and Kimball's Emancipation in the West Indies.*

'T is midnight—yet the place of prayer
Fills with the gathering throng:
At such an hour, why come they there
To pour the choral song?

Why come they? Read it in each face,
And on each unknit brow:
To-night unchains their suffering race!
And should they slumber now?

Long years of bitter, burning pain,
Of heart-corroding wo,
Were theirs; and long they wore the chain,
And long endured the blow;—
And soon, of all in bondage met,
Unbound shall rise each one,
And, free as hill-side rivulet,
Each slumbering pulse beat on.

Hark! hark! the tones of midnight bell
The day's last moments call—
Slowly, as if they beat the knell
Of childhood's funeral.
Ye tell no tale of wo or pain:
O tones! beat faster, far!
Ye call a race to life again,
As from the sepulchre.

Above that throng those notes have flown,
In silence bended low,
Save when the short half-stifled moan
Told of the hearts o'erflow.

They rise—the father and the son,
The mother in her tears,
The child, whose life hast just begun,
The sire of eighty years.

One shout—the loosened heart's pure gush,
One song thrills on each tongue—
Tones like an onward river's rush,
In the night's deep stillness rung.
Again, in trembling accents wild,
The husband weds the wife;
Again the mother bears her child,
But not a slave for life—
To toil in fetters by her side,
Or cower beneath the rod:
No—he shall stand in manly pride,
The image of his God.

Oh! every thought the heart can know
Of more than earthly bliss,
Is quickened to diviner glow
In such an hour as this.
Sing on, ye freed ones! life for you
Shall wear a brighter charm;
And ye shall tread its mazes through
With stronger heart and arm.

TO THE OLD YEAR.

Peace to thee! dying year!
The winds, that, sad as widowed mother's sigh
Sweep like a spirit's wailings hoarsely by,
Through leafless forests sere,
And o'er the frozen earth and heaving sea,
Shall thy fit death-cry and thy requiem be.

Peace! though we may not say,
Peace to the stormy passions stored within
The heart amid the world's wild stormy din,
While thou wert on thy way;
Though thou art flown, yet still we feel them here,
To cloud the sunshine of the coming year.

Yes! written on the heart
With fiery pen, their record sears it now,
And e'er will waste;—upon the Helot's brow,
The brand remains, though part

The links that bind him down; though we
may die,
'T were effort vain from goading thought to fly.

Ay! 't is a bitter thing
To read the record of our short life's years,
A tale of broken hopes, false vows, and tears,
And self-inflicted suffering;
And love, thrown shower-like to a niggard world,
With scornful laughter back upon us hurled.

Methinks our life should be,
Short as it is, as blithe as summer-day,
With not a cloud to obscure the golden ray,
Which lighted up its darkness cheerily.
But 't is not so;—for lives, e'er lived there one,
Without his sorrows 'neath the all-seeing sun?

O, silver-headed year!
Could'st thou declare all that beneath thy eye
Has fallen, works of iron Destiny;
Could mortal hear,
With brain unturned, the history of wo,
Before undreamed, unimaged here below?

Thou hast seen murder done,
In dungeons dark, where not a single ray
Of heart-rejoicing sunlight found its way—
Murder, to stop the sun
In his swift course; and thou hast seen a brother
Strike brother down, perchance son slay his mother.

Thou hast seen many die;
And many a mother weeping o'er her child,
As the expression of its face grew wild,
And fraught with meaning, and its eye
Waxed dim and meaningless, and its young bloom
Grew fit to moulder in the damp cold tomb.

And thou hast seen the maiden,
With eyes more eloquent than sweetest words,
And voice as musical as song of birds,
Who stood like young Spring, laden
With flowers; round whom as gladly they went by,
The zephyrs lingered—such hast thou seen die.

And thou hast seen the youth,
Standing "like Hermes on a heaven-kissing hill,"
Girt for life's journey, strong in heart and will,

And beautiful as truth;
Such hast thou seen sink 'neath the arm of Death,
As fall the flowers beneath the north wind's breath.

And gladder things than these
Thou hast looked on;—the bridal's jocund dance,
The merry song, the young bride's timid glance,
Smiles bright as sun-lit seas;
And thou hast seen the mother watch the dawn
Of reason on the face of her first born.

Pass on, Old Year! with all
Thy good and evil, and thy joy and wo;
Though learning by experience here below,
Yet may we not recall
A single by-gone act; then onward speed,
Not all forgotten—men shall of thee read.

And think upon thee too,
And through the journeyings of their coming years,
From thee shall date their sorrows, crimes and tears;
To bless thee, weep thee, rue;
For e'er embalmed in many a throbbing heart,
To cheer or madden it, Old Year! thou art.

CHILDHOOD.

"The season of the spring dawns like the morning,
Bedewing childhood with unrelished beauties
Of gaudy sights." *Ford's Sun's Darling.*

O CHILDHOOD! back on thy summer days,
Over past scenes, we cast the eye,
As when life was young we strained our gaze,
To scan the page of futurity;
And each dream of thy quiet and musing hours,
Which gilded life's coming tears,
Seem clustered around like morning flowers,
Those sunny and joyous years.

We looked in the world for a warmer love,
And a purer and brighter truth:
Truth, bright as that of the realms above,
Love, stronger than that of youth.
But oh! in a world as dark as this,
Have we ever found aught to bless
Our life, so sweet as a mother's kiss,
Or a sister's watchfulness?

In our grief and our gladness we see you smile
Dimmer, blest days! as the years glide by;
As the lessening bloom of an ocean isle
Recedes from the voyager's eye.
A whispered tone may illumine all
Your visions of by-gone joy—
A flower—a bird—or the laughing call
Of a free and happy boy.

Glad visions, ye come! ye come! and again
We are children happy and free;
And we dance light as fays on the moon-lit plain,
For as light of heart are we.
And tones loved of old in our ears are ringing,
And there beam upon us remembered eyes,
And nature again is over us flinging
The spell of her mysteries.

Again in blue skies and green fields we rejoice,
And the flowers shine in colors more deep,
And we list to the swift brook that lent its low voice,
To the dreams of our childhood's sleep.
And we hail as a friend, each remembered thing

Which a place in our hearts once found,
Though it sail through the sky upon burnished wing,
Or creep on the lowly ground.

Ye have flown! ye have flown! as swift as spring day
Flew by in your own glad time.
We know friends must die—but blue skies, are not they
The same in our childhood and prime?
Alas! still as fairly swell o'er us the skies,
Earth hath changed not around or above;
But we read not with open untutored eyes,
Its lessons of wisdom and love.

Take back, then, each lesson of idle lore,
We have learned of the school man's art;
And give us that priceless gem once more,
A free and untrammelled heart.

THE LADY ARABELLA JOHNSON

was the daughter of the Earl of Lincoln; and though possessed of wealth, rank and beauty which entitled her to an alliance with the proudest of England's nobility, she, with a strength of mind at once rare and admirable, became the wife of a Puritan, and following him to this country, died at Salem soon after her arrival.

Upon an humble couch laid low,
  An humble roof beneath,
An angel form reclines, her brow
  Wet with the damps of death.
Yet she hath dared the ocean wave,
  The sea storm, undismayed,
To find an early, lonely grave,
  Beneath the forest shade.

Though wasted is that form, once fair,
  And blanched that once bright cheek,
Yet is there something lingering there,
  Of by-gone days to speak;
A tale of beauty to impart,
  And queenly majesty,

When shone she, life to many a heart,
And light to many an eye.

"And why," thou askest, "doth she come,
From where she lived, to bless,
Across the wave, to find a home
Within the wilderness?"
Oh! woman's love, a love to one,
And only one heart true,
Hath power to cheer her fainting on,
A thousand dangers through.

And weeping men are standing near
That suffering, dying one,
Adown whose furrowed cheeks no tear
For many a year hath run.
They may not curb the heart's flow there,
Nor gaze in apathy,
When one so young and passing fair,
Hath lain her down to die.

And death upon that pilgrim band
Hath laid his finger cold,
And wasted, with unsparing hand,
Alike the young and old;

And not as yet hath dropped a tear,
For one so loved of all,
And yet must fall upon her ear,
The grim king's whispering call.

And hear her speak! "My husband, thou
Hast e'er been loved by me;
Though I must die, yet even now
My spirit clings to thee.
Scenes may be thine of deadly strife,
Of want and sickness drear;
Then wilt thou miss thy loving wife,
And need her voice to cheer.

"O thou may'st find a kindly one,
Whose presence shall have power
To shed the 'light of love' upon
Thy life's cloud-girted hour.
But oh! earth's myriads among,
Truer, there cannot be,
Nor one to cling as I have clung,
In joy and wo, to thee.

"Come nearer, dearest! for I feel
Life's tide is ebbing fast;

And strangely o'er my spirit steal,
The visions of the past.
Again the murmuring trees I hear,
Of our ancestral hall,
Again there falleth on mine ear
My mother's low sweet call.

"And brightly flitteth by me now,
My girlhood's golden day,
When with light step and laughing brow,
I sang its hours away.
And then there comes a darker dream,
When forth from home I went,
Yet even on it shines a gleam,
The light thy true love lent.

"I recollect the heaving sea,
The cold coast's leaden frown,
And the want which fell so heavily,
Upon our bough-built town.
Yet thou hast cheered me safely through
Each scene where fortune led,
And calmed my fear, though white spray flew
Above our tall mast-head.

"I fainter grow—my sight o'ercast
No more thy form may see;
I would, that I might to the last
Gaze happily on thee.
Come nearer for one last dim look,
And place thy hand in mine;
Though it is cold, yet once thou took
It proudly at the altar shrine.

"I go uncertain fate to meet,
On death's dark, shadowy way,
Yet would I felt would be as sweet,
Thy life's remaining day,
As that which waits me;—dark must be
Thy passage on through light and shade;
Yet sometimes, love, Oh! think of me
In heaven; the thought will aid."

She ceased: her cheek which late had burned
With high emotion wildly bright,
As back she sunk, again returned
To cold, sepulchral white.
One last, one faint attempt to show,
By faltering word, her clinging love!
One angel less is there below,
One seraph more above.

A VISION OF BEAUTY.

I saw her once amid the crowd,
A gleesome and light-hearted thing;
Her sweet voice loudest 'mid the loud,
A full and bird-like caroling;
And yet from out that eye of blue,
Which sparkled in its joyousness,
Methought a soul was looking through,
Stirred by strong thought—high holiness.

And though that voice was gladsome then,
And spake a heart with joy elate,
I knew its deep tones had power, when
Or love or injury was her fate,
To speak her soul's strong passion well,
Her heart's o'erflowing happiness;
Or in deep burning tones to tell,
Her blighted spirit's bitterness.

A glittering idol stood she there,
For many a heart's strong worshipping;
Bright gems were on her sunny hair
O'er her white forehead clustering;
Oh! shower-like was her sunshine—bright,
And glad her lot as summer's day,
And gazing there I asked, if night
Could e'er obscure her fortune's ray?

I pondered on life's rugged path,
And the world's worldly mindedness,
And thought how few the dark earth hath
Its rocky journeyings to bless;
I thought, it could not be, its scorn
Could reach one fair and good as she;
Thought that no heart could leave hers lorn
Who trusted its fidelity.

But ah! a voice came from the past,
Which told to my unwilling ear
Of many a lot like hers o'ercast,
And as bright flowers sere.
And then I could but hope—but pray,
That her's a cloudless sky might be,

That tempestless might be her way,
Upon life's tossing sea.

I have not seen her since that day,
Nor know how life's swift current ran
With her—but feel, I turned away
A happier and a better man.
I felt that life was not all dark;
That there were sun-rays in my cell;
That 'mid the clouds oft sings the lark;
That in the desert is a well.

I felt, such beauteous ones were given,
To cheer us on our lonely way;
Bright forms—bright flowers—the clear blue heaven
Are shining with the pole-star's ray,
Around—above us; and whene'er
I waver in the rushing storm,
I soothe my spirit's rising care,
By thinking on that angel form.

ON A BEAUTIFUL CHILD DRESSED IN DEEP MOURNING.

A VISION OF DEATH AND CHILDHOOD.

Oh! thou art young for sorrow, child!
Ah! far too young to know
Its deepest, darkest bitterness,
Or feel its heaviest blow;
Nor has it stolen from thy cheek
Life's deepest morning flush;
Nor checked to cold and lingering words
Thy voice's brook-like gush!

Yet strangely falls that sable veil
Above thy Parian brow;
And strangely o'er that fragile form
Those mournful vestments flow.
Oh! how thou speakest of our life,
Our sunshine and our night;
Earth cannot nurse one heavenly form
But feels its withering blight!

Though now where'er thy footsteps roam
Thou biddest all rejoice,
Well know I, by thy eye's dark glance,
And by thy deep-toned voice,
That when the warm—warm love was crushed
Of childhood's sunny years,
Death never gazed on deeper grief,
Or bitterer flood of tears.

But like the flower, that bends beneath
The storm-wind's rushing blast,
Thy spirit rose with light rebound,
The first long struggle past.
And it was well;—could childhood brook
That stern grief's slow decay,
That eateth, sharp as serpent's tooth,
Man's stubborn heart away!

What strange, strange thoughts were in thy breast,
Upon that woful day,
When bending o'er the clay-cold corpse,
Thou shuddering turned away!
Death was a strange thing to thee, child!

Thou hadst not come to know,
How surely flies the leaping shaft
From his unerring bow.

Ah! it is sad to think that thou,
E'er twenty years are gone,
Shalt don black garments many a time,
And many a time shalt mourn!
That brow shall furrowed be with care,
Those locks with thorns be crowned,
And dead men be familiar things,
And "death" a household sound.

While thine, drink in life's sweetest draught,
Pluck every flower that decks its May!
Prolong with dance, and laugh, and song,
The coming of a darker day!
When friends grow few, and passion strong,
The hey-day of existence sped,
Thy mourning garment tells me, that
Thou then shalt mourn the dead.

THOUGHTS UNDER A TREE.

I NEVER sit me down beneath
  A wood tree's pleasant shade,
And listen to the murmuring
  By its branches made,
And give myself up to the spell
  Of nature's faithfulness,
But a wounded heart pleads tearfully
    For redress!

Oh! a story is written on river and rock,
  And on the eloquent sky,
A story from whose spirit-tones
    Man cannot fly;
For it comes to his heart with a tone of love,
  And pleads for admittance there,
And we listen with stinging ears
    To its prayer.

On the sky a child is limned,
A child with sunny hair,
And a brow smooth and unwrinkled
By care!
And that child tells a tale with its rosy mouth,
Of innocence and bliss,
And days that flew like the breezes,
The flowers that kiss.

Ah me! for the days that are gone!
Wo's me! for the days that are now,
That write their sad experience
On a care-worn brow.
Down, rising heart; thou must meet
With the world like a strong—strong man;
So flush my cheek that now
Is wan.

And I'll go and brave it manfully,
And laugh as loud as the best;
And another day 'neath the green-wood tree
Thou shalt have rest.

ANGEL VISITS.

Bright ye seem as youth's best day dreams,
  Full of joy and full of praise,
Far off clouds in yellow sunbeams,
  Memory painted, other days!

There, all beautiful in sunlight,
  Stands a goodly company,
Friends, with yearning youthful love, bright,
  Who have gone their God to see.

Smile on! good friends! I'm with you smiling,
  My laughing spirit's with you there,
Hand in hand with friends beguiling
  Biting thoughts of worldly care.

Journeying now as once together
  With each phantom, hand in hand,
Still we have sun-shiny weather,
  Journeying in the warm Dream-Land.

For these travels oft my spirit
Had been longing, yet in vain!
Sad my fears, I might inherit
In this world, the curse of Cain.

For though thousands fluttered blindly
Round me in life's pleasure-blaze,
Yet not one spoke to me kindly,
Like the loved of other days.

Then I fled from life's thronged river,
And sought out a Bower of Ease,
Where the dancing sunbeams quiver
Through the shadowy roof of trees.

There I laid me down in sorrow;
There with morn's I mixed my tears;
Joy from memory nought could borrow,
Hope fled from the coming years.

Then, like morn-light coyly peeping
O'er the misty mountain's head,
Came the scene, which had been sleeping
In a heart to sorrow wed.

There memory's show was stretched before me,
  Angels with me did abide,
Angel-harpings quivered o'er me,
  Flowers sprang fragrant at my side.

Then in long white-robed procession
  Came the loved of other days,
Buried friends soothed my oppression,
  By the old familiar ways.

Again, I 'm singing, loved ones, with ye,
  As when of old we fought with care,
But ye fly! my peace I give ye,
  As ye melt in upper air.

Come again with your blest presence,
  Come again, ye spirit-friends,
Let me often know the pleasance,
  Which your shadowy coming lends.

THE MONITOR FRIEND IN HEAVEN.

We had dearly loved each other
  Through the pleasant days of youth,
As a brother loveth brother,
  With a warm, confiding truth.

We had gone on with joy unbroken,
  In youth's impulse strong and brave,
And in our talk, no word was spoken
  Of a youthful early grave.

Life was stretching bright before us,
  With its business brave and high!
Summer skies were shining o'er us,
  Summer light was in each eye.

Many plans were ours of pleasure,
  And of deeds for winning praise;
None but hearts like ours can measure
  All our plans for coming days.

Those days have come, for swift time flieth—
The crops are reaped which Hope hath sown;
A dark way before me lieth,
For I 'm journeying all alone.

Where is he who with me started?
He who hoped and loved with me?
Death our enclasped hands hath parted;
He is with eternity.

Once, I saw him glad and joyous,
In laughing tones we then talked o'er
What of gladness should employ us,
In the days for us in store.

Next, I saw him pale and gasping,
Strength-eating sickness was his lot;
Mine, his cold white hand was clasping,
Yet he knew his old friend not.

Next, there came a voice of wailing—
Heart-broken sighs of tearless wo!
Sand into the new grave falling,
Upon the coffin lid below.

Then I wept with heavy sorrow;
Youthful griefs soon have an end,
And there came a bright to-morrow,
When I thought not of my friend.

Poor and vain was then my knowledge
Of this earth, with sorrow rife;
Little knew I of the yearnings
And the wants of human life.

The days have come when I am wearied—
When companionship I crave;
Now I feel how much I buried
In that cold and yellow grave.

Divided joys and shared pleasures,
Kind words of counsel, chastened mirth,
All are lying, buried treasures,
Lost to me, beneath the earth.

Yet my spirit hath communion
With the habitant of heaven—
Angel visits, dim re-union,
To a longing heart are given.

Art thou looking from the mansion,
  Lost one! God hath given thee,
With a sweet, approving sanction,
  On these little lines and me?

I am weak; thou art made stronger;
  All things to thee are made plain;
I must dwell a little longer
  In this world of care and pain.

Life's temptations are upon me;
  Death with hastening step draws nigh:
Look not, friend, in anger on me,
  With thy pure and unfilmed eye.

Though, by and by, I hope to meet thee,
  Sand in the upper glass remains:
By and by I hope to greet thee,
  Freed from gross and sensual chains.

Thou well knowest life is irksome;
  How blind-folded mortals go:
And thou knowest sad and darksome
  Are the days, that dawn below.

Bear with me, friend! though I should heed not
Whispered tones that half upbraid;
Be not angry, though I wander
In the paths my sin has made.

Midst despondency and sorrow,
Grief and gladness, hope and fear,
Seraphic dreams and pictured horror,
I am drawing to thee near.

Standing here, by thy white tomb-stone,
I would send a prayer to thee!
Oh! pray to him who ever hearest,
That he will not frown on me!

A DIRGE FOR A CHILD.

Let us find out a pleasant tomb
For the little one,
That never tasted of the gloom
Of the life that it begun.
Where the flowers are fairly growing,
Where the brooks are gladly flowing,
Glad skies and green trees showing,
Let us bury the child.

Decay must finger its smooth brow,
Those limbs to the tomb must go,
And the revelling worms we know
Are awaiting it below.
But we 'll think of the young thing smiling,
Long hours for sad hearts beguiling;
And we know there 's a gentle whiling
In the young tomb flowers.

Sing a pleasant song, young mother!
Check complaints that do arise!
Christ is clasping thy child as a brother,
Above the arched skies.
Then cease thy idle weeping,
For the little one that is sleeping;
Gather hope flowers that are peeping
From its grave.

Look, young mother, and thou shalt see
Flowers fair as a maid just wed,
But winter is coming, and merrily
Winds will laugh at the blossoms dead.
But spring from the south is coming,
On the hills again shall be blooming—
The frost king usurper 's assuming
A short reign.

As the winds sing merry measure
O'er the summer months' decline,
So King Death is having pleasure
O'er that lost one of thine.
But he killeth not what he blighteth—
Thy child no grave benighteth;
The grave that young spirit lighteth
Like festal hall.

Then find a pleasant place to lie
That little white form in,
Where the brooks with laughing note go by,
And the birds make merry din.
And here we will come when gladly
Summer skies are shining, nor sadly
Will we weep for the young child, madly
Mocking heaven.

A PICTURE.

" Whate'er the wanton spring,
When she doth draper the ground with beauties,
Toils for, comes home to autumn." *Ford.*

He is a hale old man;
He is a stout old man;
There is light within his eye,
Tho' his head be silvery,
And his cheek is blanched and wan.

He is a glad old man;
He is a laughing old man;
And though his voice is thin,
He would think it were a sin
Not to sing if song began.

He is a talking old man;
He 's a tale-telling old man;
And he has many a store
Of actions done of yore,
When this life he first began;

A warring, swearing young man,
A fighting, stalwart young man,
With an arm as stout and staunch
As a green oak's strongest branch,
And warm blood that swiftly ran.

He is sitting by the warm fire,
He is sitting by the bright fire,
And no man's lot envies he,
With a brave child on his knee,
Kissing the warm cheek of its sire.

Red lips that fair child's are,
Soft lips that fair child's are,
And marked you how the blood ran
Bright in the face of the old man,
As it kissed its grand-papa.

'T is a pleasant sight to see,
'T is a gladsome sight to see,
That well matched grouping there;
For each are passing fair—
Hale old age and infancy.

An old man glads the eye,
An old man lights the eye,

When we know he hath a heart,
Whose love will ne'er depart,
'Till the worn out body die.

A young child 's a thing of praise,
A fair child 's a thing of praise;
For we know it hath a soul,
Under God's own blest control,
Which gives it sunny days.

But a fairer thing 's not found,
In heaven or earth 's not found,
Than the two together playing,
Each to the other saying,
What joy their souls have found.

Soon will the old man die;
The mortal old man will die;
For Death is standing near,
To carry him on his bier,
To the place where he shall lie.

The fair child may live long,
The young child may live long;
Long years must have run,
Ere it lie with the old man,
For it starteth fair and strong.

Yet not when they meet above,
Not when they embrace above,
Will each to each be nearer,
Will each to each be dearer;
Stronger cannot be their love.

Each hath a child-like spirit,
Each hath a simple spirit;
Fair thoughts to each are given,
Like those they will in heaven
As a good reward inherit.

God hath given them to the child,
Youth hath given them to the child,
But thro' sad experience,
Will the hale old man go hence,
With a spirit meek and mild.

The old man a truth hath learned,
A heavenly truth hath learned,
That to be happy here,
He must the little one revere;
So to this teacher hath he turned.

LIFE.

"This, above all, to thine own self be true,
And it must follow as the night the day,
Tho' canst not then be false to any man."

We are all wandering,
Rich treasures squandering,
Which God in his grace
Gave to the human race:
Fair and holy treasure,
To make Life lengthened pleasure.
These hearts of ours, that we
Make founts of misery,
Might flow with holy joy,
In man as well as boy;
But we shape them to new fashions,
Excluding holy passions,
Fostering frozen vipers there,
Which will kill the good and fair.
The good garden that God giveth,
To every soul that liveth,

We leave with wandering feet,
Searching out forbidden sweet.
The stars in heaven set,
We mortal fools forget;
To the ground we cast our faces,
Digging graves in darksome places;
We think not of the heart,
God has made of us a part,
Which ever doth aspire,
With a struggling strong desire,
Which is a treasury,
Where the servant memory
Might sedulously pour
Of pleasant days a store.
The flowers around us blushing,
The streams around us gushing,
The trees forever preaching
Kind words of holy teaching,
The woods, with merry sound,
The mountains girdling round,
The stars, like vestal virgins,
Ever strengthening holy urgings,
The years still onward hurrying,
The sexton ever burying,

The green graves without number,
Where enshrined dead do slumber,
The lessons pure and mild,
That God giveth through the child,
All good things to us are none,
As through Life we hurry on.

How short-sighted are we mortals,
Ever standing at Death's portals,
About to enter in,
In impotence and sin,
Yet laugh with voice of scorn,
At kind voices that would warn.
From our bosoms how we drive
The good Priest that would us shrive.

Strength to me feeble give,
Demon kind! that I may live.
Thou that every where abideth,
Thou that on the strong wind rideth,
That in the blue sky smileth,
That in the flower beguileth,
From the parti-colored show
Of vice that hideth wo!

Thou art every where about me,
And I would not be without thee.
Strength give! strength giving Demon,
Make me thy faithful leman.
With soft wings around me fly,
While I live, and when I die,
So that Life may never be
A mere holiday for me;
So that Death, when it shall come,
Shall be shorn of wo and gloom.

LINES TO A DEAR FRIEND.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

It is not long we two may walk
Beside each other, on Life's way;
A few more hours of pleasant talk—
Perhaps but one more happy day—
And I and thou must part, and one
Must lie beneath the cold tomb-stone.

God grant it be not thou! thou art
To many a spirit like sun-light;
And earth hath not a kindlier heart,
A soul more pure and bright.
And many a heart would weep if thou should go,
And many an eye grow dim to see thee low.

I might be better spared; and if I must
Before thee Death's dark valley pass,
Tho' nothing tell where sleeps my dust,
Save a few flowers—the waving grass;

If in thy memory's dream my form is blent,
I envy not the Pharaoh's monument.

Place shall within thy holy heart
My memory from oblivion save;
And if for me a tear should start,
Oh! let it fall upon my grave,
And there shall spring from sod by such tears wet,
Sweet modest flowers—the rose, the violet.

"TRUST IN THYSELF."

Ah me! methinks no vain and idle teaching
Rests in the meaning of this little line;
Nay, well I feel that in it God is preaching
To his own offspring, this strong soul of mine.

Trust in the God-like placed within thy bosom,
(So speaketh conscience to my wavering heart,)
Scorn with heaven's scorn whatever be not truthsome,
And thou shalt know how great a one thou art.

Strange is the volume, mighty and mysterious,
All must read in who well would act their part;
Yet God commands with will kind yet imperious,
"Read ye my lessons in your God-made hearts."

Year after year must onward still be flying,
Black locks be thinned and turned to silver-white;

Something we all must taste of gloomsome dying,
Ere we may read these souls of ours aright.

And yet each day that followeth the other,
We may learn something of the mighty task.
Oh! that we may not each good impulse smother!
Oh! that we may not aid from brothers ask!

Strong in the might of our own heavenly spirit,
With lynx-eye searching for the good always,
God! Father! grant in time we may inherit,
The good reward of watchful nights and days.

LINES WRITTEN IN DEJECTION.

I HAVE been ever striving
To wear among all men a smiling face,
And amidst all the sorrows of the race
Of human living,
To laugh at earthly wo and earthly care,
And look upon one side alone—the fair!

And I have thought it wrong,
When o'er me stretched the free blue boundless sky,
And earth's ten thousand joys smiled cheerily,
And birds made merry song,
To gaze with tear dimmed eye upon the gladness,
Which should root out from my dark soul its sadness.

And at the festal board,
With the mad reveller I have sat me down,
And strove with flowers Time's thin-haired brow to crown,
While the red wine was poured,
And out-laughed any laugher with me there,
And men have thought my heart was free from care.

And the coy god hath bound me
To a fair girl whose bosom, lip and eye,
Might well o'ercome a god's proud mastery;
Yet Mary! e'en from thee,
Sad have I turned; still wert thou to me dear,
For a sad hour thou couldst no longer cheer.

The heart will ache,
And soul will put to heart strange questioning,
And at the flower shadowed, heavenly spring,
God gave to man to slake
The thirsty bosom and its wants to bless,
We draw and drink the wave of bitterness.

Ah me! the doubts and fears
Which do beset us as involved in gloom
We journey to the doubt resolving tomb,
Riddles not solved by tears,
About our being, and our end, and even
About his goodness who made earth and heaven.

Father! thou made this heart,
And I would pray thee at thy own good hour,
On it thy truth begetting light to pour!
Make clear to me, thou art;
Make clear his own great purpose and his worth
To the poor being thou hast placed on earth.

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VALEDICTORY.

Thou who hast deigned to look
Upon the leaves of this the first-born book
Of a young poet! take thou an adieu
From him, who, with a spirit strong and true,
Dost wish that Truth may bless
Thy life with happiness,
And the white fountains of thy joy renew.

Thou art a human being,
And hast great task before thee, while are fleeing
The working days of life!
And there must be great strife
For thee, ere thou shalt enter
Into the garden of content,
And with a soul unbent,
Bask where joy's sunbeams centre.

And might a brother speak
From out a heart, in impulse strong, yet weak,

I would in kindness say,
Waste not thy little day,
While thou to heaven's own barns should harvest
bring,
In idleness, complaining, wrangling.
Thine is no summer business light,
Thou hast a soul to form,
From out earth's calm and storm,
And sunny day and cold black-robed night,
So that all earthly dross
Shall be thy soul's blest loss.

Thou hast soiled robes to lave,
In truth's all-whitening wave;
And when wool-white and clear,
Clothed in them thou appear,
Above the sky and all its bright-eyed daughters,
Then shalt thou have rejoicing,
At thy stewardship and nursing,
And look with pity on the soul that falters.

Therefore from all around,
Gather thou nutriment,
With fingers watchful of the great intent!
Oh! great lessons do abound,

In this teacher-earth God gave us,
From an endless night to save us!
And within are lessons lying,
Which are waiting to be used;
May thou not, friend, be accused
By thy spirit when 't is dying,
Of foul unnatural negligence,
In quickening each better sense;
And insane activity,
In nursing misery.

Therefore, before we part,
Reader kind, whoe'er thou art,
The poet, in the spirit of a brother,
Prayeth thee, in thy right, to e'er press on!
Ne'er a good impulse smother!
And may we by and by,
Both thou and I,
Meet and grasp hands on high,
In felicity!

The Albert, 11th St and University Pl
New York, Monday, May 31, 1886

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Rec'd June 1/86.

My Dear Ford:

Preserve these manuscript pages.

I ought long ago to have acknowledged your last letter, but I will not trouble you with excuses. I am not certain that you are still in Washington, but if you do not get this letter there, it will be no great matter. I am much amused by the promptness with which Everybody in New York grasps at legal holidays. This is the day for Decoration, which means that Everybody will stop work, not because they wish to do so, for any reason of carrying flowers to the soldiers graves, but simply because they wish to be idle. I am particularly out of humor, because my barber, who would see all the graves made level with the Earth before he carried so much as a sprig to them, shuts up his shop all the same, and goes some

to drink beer with other barbers. He does not care a penny for my rough chin; he has not a particle of grief for the dead soldiers; he is only glad of an opportunity not to earn money, and tomorrow when I go to him, he will tell me how poor he is, and how hard he finds it to support his family. I do not know your opinion, but mine that this "legal holiday" business has been carried quite far enough. If I reckon correctly, business and production are suspended in New York on about sixty days of the year while for about three months in the year the schools themselves are closed. On the top of this comes a demand for eight hours work per diem and presently there will be a demand for six. I believe the root of all this to be laziness. You and I, if we have anything to do are not afraid of working fourteen or fifteen hours a day, doing brain work which is the hardest of all. [illegible] a man who has nothing to do [illegible] drive nails, or shovel dirt, de-

class himself quite worn out when he has finished a dreaded six hours and strikes. The demand for increased wages is a different thing from the demand for fewer hours. If the strikers had any sense they would see that the same wages cannot for any length of time be paid for the decreased production; but if they could see it they would ask for fewer hours all the same, the fact being that they do not want to work at all, and mean to work as little as possible.

You see in what a humor my barber has put me. There is something to be said upon the other side only I am in no mood for saying it.

All the women in New York are talking about Miss Folsom and the President's marriage. As I do not see how it can have any relation to public affairs, I not only do not talk about it, but I do not think about it. I am much more interested in the fishery question which, after about a century of slip-slop diplomacy, has [illegible] to vex us. It does n

[illegible] me that your State Department
[illegible] shown any particular alacrity
in the matter. Indeed, from the
[illegible] policy which we have
adopted, I am inclined to think
that the Canadians are in the
right, as I have no doubt the
Maine skippers would violate the
law if they found it profitable and
possible to do so.

THE N[illegible]
PUBL[illegible]
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

You should be coming to Newfoundland
soon, when I trust that we may
see something of each other. As the
old friends die off, I am anxious to
keep the new ones; and I have lately
had a great loss in the death of
Abraham Payne, of Providence,
a distinguished lawyer with whom
my relations have been intimate
and kindly for half a century. He
was a man of immense natural
ability, but never did anything worthy
of his talents. Possibly you never
heard of him.

I would make this letter much
longer if I were sure of your getting it;
but I hope it does not require a
letter to convince you that I am

Faithfully Yours

OCT 26 1937